



By Faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet prepared an Ark to the saving of his household.

They looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Heb. 11:10

Many are called, but few are chosen.

This day whom will ye?

Thus saith Jesus - Shall ye come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven? Acts 1:9

Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8:4

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. Isa. 9:7

The Kingdom and dominion shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. Dan. 7:27

John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance. Acts 13:24

Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. MARK 1:14

Will ye send ye Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord? Mal. 4:5

It is that Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things.

The Megiddo Message

Devoted to the Cause of Christ

WERE THE EARLY CHRISTIANS DECEIVED
AS TO THE TIME OF THE SECOND ADVENT?

HOW MAY WE KNOW THAT WE ARE GOD'S
CHOSEN PEOPLE?

INVISIBLE BARRIERS

DANGER IN LITTLE THINGS

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

WHEN I FRET

Vol. 41, No. 25

December 4, 1954

THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

December 4, 1954

To aid your Bible study

The Megiddo Message—is published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. It defends and ably demonstrates the infallibility, harmony, and Divine inspiration of the Bible. It enables you to give a reason for your faith, to answer the atheist, and to instruct your children correctly. If you are not already a subscriber, **THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE** will be sent to your home every two weeks for six months, absolutely free. Your name and address is all we ask. Subscribers, please send in names of your friends who may be interested in reading this publication, for a free sample copy. No obligation on your part or theirs.

In addition to the **MESSAGE** you should by all means read the following booklets by the late Rev. L. T. Nichols, founder of the Megiddo Mission. Each booklet is a complete subject of itself. They make the Bible understandable and interesting to study.

HISTORY OF THE MEGIDDO MISSION THE COMING OF JESUS AND ELIJAH WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

THE KINGDOM OF GOD
THE GREAT APOSTASY
AFTER DEATH, WHAT?
HELL AND THE DEVIL
SPIRITUAL CREATION
THE HOLY SPIRIT
THE SABBATH
THE TRINITY

Complete set \$1.50
Single copies15

The Known Bible and its Defense

IN TWO VOLUMES

By the late Rev. Maud Hembree

As a further study of the Scriptures these books are invaluable to the earnest student. They were designed to bring men and women back to the Bible, and to defend its pages from the attacks of the skeptics, infidels, and atheists. Many perplexing questions and seeming contradictions are answered in a direct and fearless manner. Fabrikoid binding.

Vol. 1, 384 pages \$1.50
Vol. 2, 404 pages 1.50
Both volumes 2.50

Megiddo Hymn Book

A COLLECTION of original, arranged, and selected songs which harmonize with the plain Biblical teachings and in which all who wish may engage and sing as commanded, "with the spirit," and "with the understanding also." Price \$1.25

To help your children

MORE and more our nation is being awakened to the dread consequences from the lack of moral training in childhood. Juvenile delinquency increases like a plague! Parents especially have a tremendous responsibility in rearing their children to be good citizens. Lack of proper religious training in childhood is certain to bring dire results in adulthood.

The Megiddo Mission has a continually growing department whose specialty is the designing and printing of Bible lessons for children of all ages, from tots to adolescents. These lessons are designed in an interesting and attractive manner. Readers of the **MESSAGE** who desire further information may receive the same on request. The booklets listed below are now available, and more are to follow. Watch these columns for new announcements!

The Story of Joseph—the familiar, timeless drama of virtue under temptation, of forgiveness for injuries, of God's providence for His people, unfolds anew in its 83 interesting pages.

With full-color illustrations. Price .15

Daniel—an inspiring story of Daniel and his three companions in the city of Babylon, related in a manner which will appeal to the youthful mind. 46 pages, illustrated. Price .15

Bible Story Color Book—a something-to-do book! It contains thirty-two delightful short stories of favorite Bible characters, with illustrating pictures to color, Size 8½ x 11. Instructive, entertaining. Price .50

Pictures for Busy Little Hands to Color, Cut Out and Paste

Twenty-two pages. Wholesome childhood scenes in poster pictures to be colored, cut out and assembled. Size 9 x 12. Price .35

Synopsis of Our Faith and Work

THE Megiddo Mission is an independent organization. It is in no way affiliated with any other religious body. It was founded in the year 1880 by the late Rev. L. T. Nichols, and has been located at the present address in Rochester, N. Y., since 1904.

The word "Megiddo" is of Hebrew origin, its meaning being: True soldiers of God; God is in this place with a band of troops.

It is the firm belief of the Megiddo Mission that the second coming of Jesus Christ and the inauguration of His world-wide Kingdom is imminent. The Bible clearly declares that this event will be preceded by the coming of Elijah the Prophet to herald the glorious Day, to gather the saints, and raise the dead to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

Being convinced that these events are near at hand, the Megiddo Mission is earnestly endeavoring to prepare a people to be ready for the Lord's advent. Moral perfection besides purity of doctrine is a direct Biblical command. Among the members of the Megiddo Mission perfection of character is the goal. Invitations are always extended to whomsoever will to come and join us in this work, and partake of the "water of life freely."

The Story of the Ages

(Our Cover)

UNIQUE as our cover design may appear, it shows the different episodes of how the Lord's message was delivered to His people. From Noah and all the Prophets down to John the Baptist and Jesus the message of the Kingdom is boldly heralded. Then it is carried with new power by the Apostles, and, though silenced through the Dark Ages, is revived in these days and once again the tidings of the Kingdom are heard. And it shall be heard until the appearance of the Prophet Elijah (Mal. 4: 5) with divine power to expand the work on a gigantic scale which will consummate in the establishment of the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ as Supreme Ruler. Then the hope of those who "looked for a city . . . whose builder and maker is God" shall be realized with a crown for all who have overcome.

THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE is published biweekly by the Megiddo Mission Church, 481 Thurston Rd., Rochester 19, N. Y. Subscription rates: One year, \$1.00; 6 months, 50 cents; single copies, 5 cents. In Great Britain and other sterling areas subscription fees are payable through the medium of the International Money Orders which can be secured through the local bank, or International Reply Coupons (current value, eight cents) which can be purchased at the post office. Make checks or Money Orders for all literature payable to the Megiddo Mission Church. Please notify promptly of any change of address. Entered as second-class matter, October 15, 1920, at the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879.

Were the Early Christians Deceived as to the Time of the Second Advent?

Scripture reading, Second Thessalonians 2:1-8.

Did Jesus or His Apostles teach that Christ would come in that age?

MANY teachers at the present time are proclaiming that Jesus and His Apostles were deceived; that Jesus Himself believed He would soon return, and that the Apostles expected Him to return and set up His Kingdom in that day.

A text often quoted in an effort to prove that Jesus expected to return in that first century, is Matt. 16:27, 28, as follows: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." If Jesus had not qualified this statement, it would teach plainly that He would come to establish His Kingdom during the lifetime of some standing there. It is plainly qualified, however, in chapter 17.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias. . . . Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here. . . . While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."

The key to explain the entire occurrence is found in Jesus' words, "Tell the *vision* to no man." Some standing there saw the Son of man coming in His Kingdom—but how? In the *vision*, not in reality. In the vision Jesus was transfigured, that is, He was changed in figure before them. They were shown a vision of Him as the future King of the glorious Kingdom on earth which He will establish at His second advent. In the vision, Moses represents those who pass through death and shall receive a resurrection from the dead at the last day. Elias (Elijah), represents the faithful who are living when Christ comes again, and who shall never die but shall be changed into immortal beings. Peter, James, and John, are representative of the mortal nations of the earth who will submit to the King of kings at His coming. It all was simply a vision of the Kingdom of Christ when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

False teachers, in an endeavor to uphold a fallacious

theory that Moses, though dead, could appear in their midst, have attempted to prove that this was a literal occurrence. But the words of Jesus, "Tell the vision to no man," prove their theory untrue. The words of the Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles, all prove that the dead are unconscious, as we are told in Eccl. 9:5, 10, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything. . . . Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

We find the same sentiment in Psalm 115:17, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Also in Psalm 146:3, 4, we read: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help [salvation]. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." In Psalm 6:5 it is stated that if dead, there is no consciousness: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" And the Apostle Paul says plainly in I. Thess. 4:13-15 that the dead are sleeping, and shall not live again until the time for Christ to appear the "second time."

The Apostle Peter, who was present and witnessed the vision or transfiguration, testified in his Second Epistle (1:16), "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." He was an eyewitness of the Lord's majesty and glory as it will be at His second advent; and this was when he saw in the vision his Master changed in figure. He had no idea of implying that Christ had really come; for in his First Epistle (5:4) he writes: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." How plain! He says it is when Christ, the chief Shepherd, appears the second time, the reward or crown of glory shall be bestowed upon the faithful.

When we read in his Second Epistle (3:3, 4) what he says about the second coming, we wonder how anyone could be so blind as to think the Apostle believed his Lord was to appear the second time in the lifetime of the Apostles who witnessed the transfiguration. Let us read it and see if it carries any such idea. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" In what last days would this cry be made? In the last days of Gentile times. Over nineteen hundred years ago the Apostle Peter foretold this very condition which we witness today on every hand; that scoffers would arise and be crying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" Had the Apostle believed that Christ would come in that age in which he lived and wrote, would he have uttered such words? No!

In order to enlighten God's people as to the time of Christ's second coming, he wrote in verse 8 of this same chapter, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing,

that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Now let us see if we can find what is the meaning of this saying. In Hebrews 10:1 we are told that "the law having a shadow of good things to come" was a type. In Exodus 20 we find that under the law of Moses there were six days of labor and toil, and the seventh was a day of rest, and this was a type of something greater. Reckoning a day as a thousand years, gives us six thousand years of labor and toil of man's rule on the earth before the blessed seventh day of rest of a thousand years is ushered in. This is what Peter the Apostle was teaching when he entreated that they should not be ignorant of the fact that one day represents a thousand years. He was proving that Christ's Kingdom of peace would not be set up until the close of the six thousand years of man's rule on the earth.

He explains in verse 9 why Christ had not come: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish." There had to be a people taken out from the Gentiles; and Jesus has waited through the centuries for all who would repent and work righteousness to become worthy of living with Him in that glorious coming age. For the Apostle continues, that notwithstanding His longsuffering in waiting for all who would come to repentance, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise." Would Christ come as a thief if they were looking for His coming? No. Many scoffers have turned mankind from this truth; but, despite the scoffers, He will come, and the present political heavens and earth, the corrupt rulers and the wicked people over whom they rule, shall pass away to be no more, and God's Kingdom of peace shall fill the earth.

Matthew 10:23 is another text which is quoted in an attempt to prove that Christ was expected to return in that early day. Jesus said: "But when they persecute you in this city, flee into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." How would the Son of man come before they had gone over the cities of Israel? He would come in vision. Did we not read where Peter testified that he was an eyewitness of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the time when there came a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? That was the coming to which Jesus referred. And when Peter speaks in II. Pet. 1:16 of being an eyewitness of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is positive proof he was referring to the scene at the Transfiguration.

In Matthew 25 Jesus gave a wonderful revelation of future events which would precede His second coming. He likened the Kingdom of heaven to "ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." This term "ten" is a sacred or round number, representing all who enter into covenant to serve God, both faithful and unfaithful, wise and foolish. "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." It is not a literal lamp they carried, for in Ps. 119:105 we are told what the "lamp" is: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." They had a lamp, the wonderful word of the Lord, and the wise kept the light burning brightly, were not simply hearers but also doers of the word; while the foolish let the light go out, lost their first love for truth and grew weary in well doing.

Then follows the record of the most lamentable event of all time: "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slum-

bered and slept." Christ the Bridegroom went to Heaven, the Most Holy Place, as our great High Priest; and all went to sleep! No truth is more plainly taught in the Scriptures and verified on the pages of history, than that all apostatized, forsook the truth, and that all this was to happen before Christ's second advent.

In Daniel 7:25 and 8:12 we are told of the great power that was to arise and "wear out the saints of the Most High . . . change times and laws," and "cast down the truth to the ground." This same terrible event was foretold by Paul, in II. Tim. 4:3, 4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Were they not spiritually asleep when turned from the truth to fables?

Although Jesus had revealed this truth in Matt. 25:5, He was so interested to have it deeply impressed upon the minds of His people that after His ascension to the Father He sent back to earth another message, which is recorded in Rev. 13:1, 5, 7, 11, telling of the great power which would "make war with the saints" and "overcome them." History, both secular and ecclesiastical, is one continuous recital of evidence that the religion of Jesus Christ was lost sight of, and that during the Dark Ages the veil of darkness was over all nations. The historian Mosheim states that "during the seventh century true religion lay buried under a senseless mass of superstitions, and was unable to raise her head."

But we learn from Matt. 25:6 that truth was not always to be cast to the earth; someone would awake from the slumber which had benumbed all nations; for Jesus said, "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." This is the same cry as proclaimed by the Prophet Joel (2:1, 16), "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. . . . Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children . . . let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet." We have only to read the first chapter of Joel to know that the Prophet is speaking of the long night of darkness in which all would slumber and sleep, the time when no trees of righteousness were bearing the lovely fruits of the spirit, but all mankind had been turned away from truth to fables.

Jesus had said in Matt. 24:45 that there would be a "faithful and wise servant" to give the household meat in due season. The faithful and wise servant is the one to sound the midnight cry. Christ the Bridegroom would not come as soon as the midnight cry began to be sounded, for there was to be a time of preparation for those taken out in this "eleventh hour" of the day of salvation (Matt. 20:9).

From Matt. 25:7-12 we learn that after the midnight cry sounds, there are faithful and unfaithful servants; some with lamps burning brightly, others with lamps going out. In verses 14, 19, Jesus says: "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered them his goods." It is *His own servants* He deals with. "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." Pay careful heed to these words. From the time Jesus ascended to the Father, to the time He will come to call His servants to account, *is a long time*. Jesus plainly qualifies it and says it is to be a "long time" from the time He left His disciples until His return to reckon with them. While it is a long time since He left His disciples

until His return, it will be but a short time from the time the midnight cry sounds until His return, as we are told in Rom. 9: 28, "He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." This also explains why Jesus said in Rev. 22: 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." It is quickly after the sounding of the midnight cry that He will appear in His glory.

An infidel writer says in reference to Christ: "The realization of a fancied millennium, which he several times predicted would take place in his time, 'before this generation pass away,' proves a like ignorance both of astronomy and philosophy."

Many false teachers have made like statements, ridiculing Jesus, as though He meant to teach that the generation then living was to witness His return. They do not realize they are the ones in ignorance because of having failed to read the qualifying terms so plainly given. Had they read Luke 21: 8, they could have had the warning from Jesus' own words: "Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not after them." Jesus plainly warns not to be deceived by impostors who were to arise, saying that the time draws near. Much was to happen between His ascension and His return to earth.

In the following verses He tells them that nation shall rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom; and in verses 20—32 He is foretelling many events which must precede His second coming. He said: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." He was here foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jewish nation under the command of Titus and Vespasian at the head of the Roman army, A. D. 70, when over a million Jews perished in the siege and thousands were taken captive according to His prediction: "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Jesus stretches His grand prophetic chain from the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Jewish age ended, over the centuries of Gentile times to the glorious Day when Jerusalem, no longer in bondage, trodden down of the Gentiles, shall rise from the dust of ages to become "the city of the great King" (Matt. 5: 35). But what shall occur as the Gentile times are closing? "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

The infidel writer who thought Jesus displayed ignorance of astronomy, imagined that in these verses reference was made to signs in the literal heavens. But in so thinking he displayed his own ignorance, for Jesus had no reference to the physical heavens, but to "the national sky, the political heavens, where many suns have set, and many are waning." He looked down through the ages, past the dark Medieval Age, to the close of the Gentile times; and scanning the political heavens He saw dark clouds rising here and there. He had said in John 14: 29, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." He warned

that all nations would be preparing for war, and in great fear would endeavor to come to terms so that they could cry, "Peace and safety," yet with suspicion and distrust on every hand. Worse than all, He saw the wave of moral desolation sweeping over the land; a condition of which a noted speaker, after enumerating a number of the degrading tendencies and gross evils of the age, comments: "... when those things and worse represent the chief trend in human thought and life, then the human race is trembling on the edge of an abyss deeper and fouler than any reached by the civilizations of the past."

And now comes a report from J. Edgar Hoover, F. B. I. Director. In it he states: "The total of major crimes for the first half of 1954 is 1,136,140. That is an increase of 88,850 over the same period of last year. . . . It's not simply a big city problem. It's everywhere, even in rural districts. . . ." A prominent worker for the betterment of social conditions states: "There wasn't a tenth as much crime during prohibition as there is now. Americans are spending \$1,000,000 an hour for drink now—more than \$8,000,000,000 for all kinds of alcoholic beverages a year."

Can we not realize from these pictures of the present age and of what is coming, that Jesus had knowledge of the future degeneracy when He said: "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. . . . Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Matt. 24: 37, 38; Luke 17: 26—30). Immorality was the ruling vice of Sodom, and it has become the greatest vice of the world today. This evil, together with the dark cloud of crime which has arisen in such great proportions in these United States—murders, sex-crimes, robbery, and thefts—with lawlessness increasing among the very young, will continue, fulfilling the prediction of Jesus: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

In the very next verse He states: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." When should they see the Son of man coming? A "long time" after He left them He would come—at the close of the Gentile age. Further He said: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled."

What generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled and the King appears? This has no reference to those living in the first century; it is the generation of His people called out after the sounding of the midnight cry, those who have witnessed the budding of the "fig tree." The "ye" who see these things coming to pass compose the "generation" which will not pass away but shall live to see the coming of Jesus. They are the kind of generation of which we read in I. Peter 2: 9, "Ye are a chosen generation . . . a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." It is such a generation called out after the midnight cry; and some of this generation shall live until the Master returns. It was for the consolation of this generation that Jesus sent the joyful message back from Heaven: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

A prominent minister once stated in a sermon: "What a difference there is between the Apostolic Church and the Church of our day! In externals, of course, they are worlds apart." He was referring, of course, to the nominal churches of the day. He continued: "But the interior world of the Apostolic Church was also entirely different from the mood of the church today. There was a spirit of expectancy in that Church which we do not possess. There was a hope which we have lost. There was a mood of anticipation, to which we are strangers. . . . The Apostolic Church was a radiant Church. . . . The face of that Church shone. Our face does not shine. One of the reasons why the jubilant tone has vanished is because we have lost the expectancy which the Apostles possessed." He then attempted to show that the difference between the Apostolic Church and the churches of today is that the Apostles were expecting Christ to return in their time; and he said: "It is very largely because the Apostles were mistaken about the manner of his coming." In an attempt to prove his point, he said: "When you open the Epistle of James you find the author saying in the fifth chapter, 'Be patient, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' That was his reason for being patient."

Let anyone read with an unbiased mind James 5 and he will be convinced that the Apostle did not expect the Lord's return in his day. He said: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. . . . Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you. . . . Ye have heaped treasures together for the last days." Of what time is James speaking? Of the last days of Gentile times, when the rich shall abound in wealth. Millionaires, multimillionaires and billionaires were unknown in the days of the Apostles; it was of the "last days," our own day, that he was speaking when he said they "have heaped treasures together" and "have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton." But he cried: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

This same minister dwelt especially on the assumption that the Apostle Paul was wrong. It was a wicked thing to do, seeing that the brave Apostle made the subject so plain. We will let his own writings prove he was not mistaken. He states in II. Thess. 1:7, 10 that the Lord is coming: "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels . . . when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired of all them that believe." Then for fear someone might pervert his words, he says in ch. 2:1-6, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of the Lord Jesus, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

He warned emphatically not to be deceived by any false teacher who might claim that he was teaching that Christ would come in that day. No; Christ would not come until after the falling away from the truth, which would be caused by the rise of the man of sin or the evil power which would wear out the saints of the Most High and cast the truth to the ground. Instead of "a falling away first," it is rendered in both Weymouth's translation and Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott*, "the Apostasy must come first." The Apostle not only wrote this to the Thessalonian

brethren, but he also *told them personally*, for he says in verse 5, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" He had made plain to them that Christ would not come until after the Apostasy or falling away from the truth, and he wanted them not to forget it.

He also made it plain in II. Tim. 4:1, 7, 8 that he did not expect Christ to return in that age, for he said: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. . . . I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." He did not expect the reward to be given in that age, but the crown of glory was to be laid up for him and for all who love His appearing, to be bestowed at the Judgment seat of Christ when He comes to judge the living and the dead and set up His glorious Kingdom at His second advent.

"THOU FOOL"

One of the most striking of our Lord's parables is a solemn warning against being preoccupied with the world and its things. He describes a man caught up, mind, body and soul, into a purely materialistic way of life. Successful and prosperous he loses all sense of his spiritual greatness. On the very night when death is knocking at his door he congratulates himself on his prosperity. What does Jesus call him? He calls him a fool. By what other name could such a man be called who repudiates his spiritual greatness and ignores God? But if we will not hearken to Jesus we may attend to what a modern author has to say. He has written about a mill owner who, through his own initiative, has built up a big concern, wealth and success are his. One day he saunters around looking at the great mill and pauses to watch the wheat passing towards the hopper where it will be ground to flour—there are tons of it, it all means wealth to him. Suddenly he loses his balance and falls headlong into the flowing golden grain and is rapidly swept towards the machinery. His cries die unheard as he is suffocated by the dust amid the whirring noises of the machinery and he is swept to destruction by the very thing that had brought him success and wealth. This is only a story, but it is more than a story. It is a comment on modern man, on the way the world, its machinery, its wealth, its allurements, dominates men and ultimately destroys them.

—Sel.

YOUR OFFERING

Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace
That where there is hatred I may bring love.
That where there is wrong I may bring the spirit of forgiveness.
That where there is discord I may bring harmony.
That where there is error I may bring truth,
That where there is doubt I may bring faith,
That where there is despair I may bring hope,
That where there are shadows I may bring Thy light,
That where there is sadness I may bring joy.

—Sel.

HOW MAY WE KNOW THAT WE ARE GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE?

A FRIEND writes from Hawaii: "I love your exposition of the Bible in general; but think you may be mistaken in some points. There are many sects who make a similar claim to yourselves and invite us to come out from the churches and be separate, but that does not prove that they are the chosen ones."

It is quite true that such a claim does not prove that we are God's chosen people. While we believe without a doubt that we have been led out of the darkness of superstition and error into the light of Truth; that we have discarded all the fables and false doctrines of men; yet we do not ask anyone to believe, only as we produce the plainest Bible evidence to substantiate our belief.

The Prophet Isaiah affirms: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (8:20). The Apostle declares: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I. Pet. 4:11). So we request our readers to compare all that we say or have taught with the Word of God; for we are commanded to "try the spirits [or teachers], whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I. John 4:1).

God is not the author of both error and truth; for the Apostle John also declares: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." This is the message which we wish to bear; this is the rule by which we must be governed in order to become a child of God. Listen to what he says further: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (I. John 1:5, 6).

The Apostle Paul could say of his brethren in the flesh, the Israelites: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:2, 3). This is strong evidence that zeal will not save any man or woman. In order to become a child of God and merit His wonderful salvation, we must walk in the light as He is in the light; must submit ourselves to His righteousness, His rule of right doing.

Another objection this friend brings forward is the following: "I cannot say that I agree with your exposition of the 144,000 that they are the only ones redeemed from the earth until the Millennium. Now according to my belief we have the testimony that the ancient church before Abraham consisted almost wholly of righteous persons. . . . It being my belief that many of the heathen, who cannot be held responsible for ignorance, will be saved, it would seem that there ought to be more than 144,000."

Where, we ask, did you ever read in the Word that men and women are not held responsible for ignorance? Your belief conflicts with the message God has given through the Prophets and Apostles. Harken to His word by the Prophet: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Now hear the Apostle Paul: "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their

heart" (Eph. 4:17, 18). What does God say the effect of ignorance is? It alienates from the life of God. Can this be denied?

But, you may say: "Oh, they never had the opportunity to learn!" Do you dare to contradict God's word and limit His power? Have you ever read what Jesus said in John 7:17? It is one of the most comforting verses in the Bible: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." The Mighty God of Heaven is all-wise and merciful, and He never allowed one person to perish who would do His will. Jesus gave the same message to Paul, and he proclaimed in I. Tim. 4:8, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." All who will keep God's commandments and become godlike, have the promise of this life in which to do the work required.

Jesus will tell in John 5:40 why there are few in the narrow way. He says: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Also in Matt. 13:15 He says: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, . . . and should be converted, and I should heal them." God sends the loving call through Jer. 4:14, "Wash thine heart from wickedness that thou mayest be saved." But in ch. 6:17 is given the answer of the great multitude: "We will not hearken."

The friend in Hawaii also makes the assertion that "we have the testimony that the ancient church before Abraham's time consisted almost wholly of righteous people." This is in direct opposition to the plainest statements of God's Word. We have the testimony of God Himself that within 1,656 years from the beginning of the probation of Adam, "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Then further, in verse 12, we read: "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The mind is left to fill up the outlines of this picture with everything that is base, false, deceitful, licentious and profane. The effects produced by this universal depravity are forcibly expressed in the words of verse 11, "The earth was filled with violence." And the Apostle Peter confirms the account when he tells us that God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (II. Pet. 2:5). Not many of the 144,000 were found in that day!

We have only to read the 18th chapter of Genesis to learn how corrupt the world was in the days of Abraham. The noble "father of the faithful" besought the Angel of God to spare Sodom if fifty righteous persons could be found therein. But fifty could not be found. Then the plea went forth to spare it if there were forty-five willing to forsake evil. At last he pleaded for its preservation if only ten righteous ones could be found. But not even ten could be found among its wicked inhabitants—and Sodom was swept to destruction.

In the days of Moses, the Almighty said to His people: "Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God. . . . The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the

fewest of all people" (Deut. 7: 6, 7). Those who have been willing to forsake evil and serve the Living God have ever been the fewest of all people. Jesus confirms this in Matt. 7: 13, 14, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Many are in the broad way, but how many will be found willing to go in the narrow way? Listen to the answer by Jesus: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Read the history of the reign of the Kings of Israel, read through the book of Judges, and see how few were found who wholly followed the Lord. Many more were saved during the Apostolic Age than in any other; and yet it was not long after the days of Jesus that the Apostasy set in and the great "falling away" which the Apostle Paul foretold in II. Thess. 2: 3 was a reality, and the long night of darkness (Dan. 7: 25; 8: 12; Rev. 13: 7) of 1260 years followed down through the Dark Ages.

Read the history of the world during those ages: "A train of Alexanders, Cæsars, Hannibals, Jenghis Khans, Attilas, Tamerlanes, Marlboroughs, Fredericks, Bonapartes, who have driven the plowshare of devastation through the world, erected thrones over the graves of slaughtered nations, decorated their palaces with trophies dyed in blood, and made the earth to resound with the groans and shrieks of dying victims, and the voice of mourning, lamentation and woe."

To realize the moral condition of the present time, we have only to think of the three most cruel and destructive wars of all recorded history casting their blighting shadow over millions in this twentieth century of so-called civilization. If only we will be governed by evidence, both historical and Biblical, it will cause every honest-hearted one to realize what the world has been and is now; and we will believe that the Lord God has done a wonderful work in this six thousand years to save 144,000 men and women who would make themselves over into new creatures worthy of eternal life; men and women who, by "patient continuance in well doing" in the face of a frowning world, earned the Divine approbation.

Jesus did not teach the false doctrine proclaimed by the world and believed by the masses, that He did the work for them; but He taught always and at all times that we must work out our own salvation (Phil. 2: 12). To the church at Sardis He wrote: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments: and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." Again He proclaimed: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 3: 21). The Revelator had a vision of the grand future, and he said in Rev. 14: 1, "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having the Father's name written in their foreheads." What is the Father's name which they bear? The answer is given in Rev. 19: 13, "And his name is called The Word of God." They have written the word of God in their minds and lived out its life-giving principles. They shall reign with Christ; and then the proclamation shall go forth: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come" (v. 7). Then Christ will conquer the world, or bind the devil, all sinners and evil doers. During the grand Millennial reign, when no evil is allowed on the face of the earth, a great number shall be taken out for the subjects of the Kingdom; and so in seven thousand years the Lord will fill the earth with happy, immortal beings, and thus His will shall be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.

INVISIBLE BARRIERS

A LARGE passenger steamboat is slowly plying the waters of an American lake. To the passengers everything appears as usual, but the captain and crew realize something is wrong. The boat is hindered in its progress. Although unnoticed by the passengers, it is not moving toward its goal as fast as it is capable of going. The reason? In some of the lakes of America, the passage of boats is strangely slowed because of the downward pull of the magnetic power of deep mud concealed below the surface of the waters.

So it is in the Christian's life. Too often in our journey toward the evergreen shore we meet with obstructions unseen and unnoticed by those around us, but are barriers nevertheless that hinder our progress toward that goal we seek.

Today, as in the ages past, the Eternal is calling to us through His Word. He is pleading with us to reach deep into our hearts and remove the barriers that separate us from Him. He is ready to do on His part, but these barriers are upon our side, not of His unwillingness but our unyieldingness. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that he cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59: 1, 2).

Do we realize the danger the ultimate consequences that continued tolerance of these barriers will cause? It lies with us alone to remove them, for they are hidden deep in our hearts and perhaps known only to God and to ourselves. How great then is the necessity of opening our hearts and declaring our iniquity!

Perhaps the greatest barrier in these last days is lack of faith. When the way is rough and the work seems almost impossible, do we secretly lack faith and fail to trust God? Faith is the prime requisite of a Christian's life. It is God's commandment that above all things we must take the shield of faith if we would meet the battles of life triumphantly. Without faith it is impossible to please God; the work appears burdensome, minute obstacles grow to immense mountains, we tremble and flee before our enemy and fall into numerous pitfalls and temptations. But if we possess a sound faith, our spiritual resources are strengthened. Where once we were weak, now we are strong. Troubles and obstacles are met bravely and confidently. So there is great need of tearing down the barrier of lack of faith, and in its place cultivate our faith daily and keep it growing stronger and more radiant.

How many times have we been confronted with the barrier of evil thoughts, thoughts we cannot share with God, for "... my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55: 8, 9). The secret thought never expressed is just as effectual in staining the heart as though the whole world knew all about it. We are not responsible for the thoughts that pass our door, but we are responsible for those we admit and entertain. These secret thoughts must be abolished and replaced with God's thoughts. The Apostle, in his letter to the Philippian brethren (4: 8), says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any vir-

tue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." With our mind filled with thoughts of this type, we shall soon find we have no room for evil thoughts.

Pride and its outgrowth Envy, may be the barriers that are hindering our progress. Pride is a deeply-rooted ailment of the heart. The penalty is misery; the remedy lies in the sincere, life-long cultivation of humility, which means true self-evaluation and a proper perspective of the future. Envy is dangerous, because it dwells so deep in the heart; consequently it is difficult to uproot. Though sometimes envy is openly manifested, yet more often it must be classed in the category of secret sins, invisible barriers. At Judgment one spark of envy or pride will change our position from a sheep to a goat, from the right to the left. Therefore let us stifle these stinging barriers so that no circumstance which may arise will cause the ignition of a single spark, and let us strive to replace them with the lovely virtue of humility. The Wise Man says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," and "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honor is humility" (Prov. 16: 18; 18: 12).

Then there are selfishness, jealousy and covetousness—barriers that we may have to contend with. But whatever the barriers we must overcome them, for our entrance to that beautiful shore depends upon it.

We may try to deceive ourselves, we may think that one secret sin will not be noticed; but before the all-searching eyes of the Judge, nothing less than a spotless character will pass inspection. It is a work that calls for a constant warfare, but it brings peace of mind and happiness that can be obtained in no other way. We must keep our hearts open, a clear channel through which this life-giving water can flow in a never-ceasing stream. If any invisible barrier is pulling us down, our progress will be hindered.

May we ever remember, "If thou wouldst conquer thy weakness thou must not gratify it." Never let the things we cannot have or do not have or should not have, spoil our enjoyment of the things we do have and can have. If we value our happiness, let us not forget it; for one of the greatest lessons in life is learning to be happy without the things we cannot or should not have. When we have learned that lesson, we shall experience smooth sailing, with nothing to hinder our progress toward that shore.

The day is near at hand when our Lord will return and He will know if we are being held back by these barriers. Are we putting forth every effort to get ready to meet Him at His returning? Are we daily endeavoring to remove those hidden barriers that pull down and hinder our passage to the evergreen shores where we may bask in the sunlight of His righteousness forever?

Let us all resolve with the Psalmist (38: 17, 18) to say, "For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."

"If you wish to be miserable, you must think about what you want, what you like, what respect people ought to pay you, what people think of you; and then to you nothing will be pure. You will spoil everything you touch; you will make sin and misery out of everything God sends you; you can be as wretched as you choose." —Sel.

Before we can know real work we must know real rest. We must rest in Christ while we work for Christ.

DANGER IN LITTLE THINGS

IN a great store in New York City, which sells thousands of dollars' worth of rugs and carpets every year, fumigation of these floor coverings takes place once a week. Hard as it is to believe, every rug in that place is inspected and fumigated once a week. The reason, of course, is quite apparent. That firm does not intend that moths get started. It would take only a few of these little pests to destroy in a short time some of the costliest fabrics in the store. The way to guard against them is to be sure they never get started!

So careful about rugs, and so indifferent about souls! Few people guard their souls as carefully as this firm guards their rugs. They can be quite unconcerned about soiled spots on their character, upon which moths—little sins—thrive. They pay no more attention to their devastating little weaknesses than some people do to their rugs, until they are nearly ruined by the moths.

Many persons spiritually ailing pay very little attention to the fact that they need a thorough fumigation of their character and that little member, the tongue, which boasteth great things. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The tongue reveals what is in the mind. All evils thrive on simple neglect. In all realms where possible, evils work; our neglect means their success.

"The issue of the life we weave with colors all our own; In the field of destiny we reap as we have sown."

As the Apostle Paul said in Romans 7: 21, 23, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. . . . I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind. . . ." How much nobler to develop the desire for higher things! Such a one will not want to be let alone but will cry in the words of the Psalmist, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

How foolish it would be to let some little self-importance stand between us and such a glorious future as portrayed in the blessed Word of the Lord! How apt human nature is to think too highly of self! Will we sell our birthright for such an insignificant mess of pottage; or will we watch the little things? For there is danger for all; "danger in little things, they will cause some to fall." One is not so apt to fall over big sins as over the little ones.

One of the basic teachings of Christ is that a man must forsake himself. Some people are willing to give up almost everything they have for such a wonderful reward, yet will fail because they have never resigned their will into the hands of God. Our Lord's word was: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." Nothing is so hard to give up as ourself. No person or thing keeps us from a full surrender to God's way as effectually as does a devotion to our own selfish interest. We stand in our own way more often than we think from some desire of our own nature than from an obstinate circumstance planted athwart our pathway.

To be a Christian means to be Christ-like; and He left us an example when He said that He never sought His own will but the Father's. The Bible portrays the fact that life is a struggle against the lower nature. Its greatest promises are made to those who resist and overcome all temptation (Rev. 21: 7).

(Continued on page 9)

Meditations on the Word

MEMORY VERSE: Proverbs 18: 21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."

The wording of the latter part of this text in our common version of the Bible borders on the ambiguous, the antecedent of the pronoun "it" being left in doubt. Perhaps it was fully intelligible to the savants of King James I, but to us the modern-language translations make it clearer. The Smith-Goodspeed American Version renders it, "... those who indulge it must eat the fruit of it." Dr. Moffatt's translation is even more to the point: "Death and life are determined by the tongue: the talkative must take the consequences."

In both human and Divine literature, the man of many words is the target of much uncomplimentary criticism. The babbler has few friends, if many imitators; the curse of an unstanched speech is well known to breed troubles out of all proportion. A wagging tongue, we are told, has often shaken out its master's undoing. This potent little member, apparently so small and weak, is compared by the Psalmist to a sharp sword, and termed by the Apostle James "an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (ch. 3: 8). "The stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones," says the sage Yahshua ben Sirach. "Many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not so many as by the stroke of the tongue" (Ecclesiasticus 28: 17, 18, Douay Version).

Most of us do not realize the dangers of playing with words. We recall the old schoolbook parable of the man who confessed to his priest that he had slandered his neighbor. How should he atone for the injury? Gravely the priest handed him a bag of feathers and instructed him to lay one at the gate of every person to whom he had repeated the calumny. This accomplished, he reported to the priest and was told to go out and gather them all up. This, of course, proved to be impossible; the feathers had gone with the wind.

"You see, my son," said the priest, "the impossibility of recalling words, once they are spoken."

Much has been said, both in this column and elsewhere, of the imperative need for better control of the tongue. Much *needs* to be said, for the tongue requires a lot of taming. But are we *doing* as much as we are saying about it? The spirit is willing, but, alas! the flesh is weak. We are all aware, consciously or subconsciously, that the sound of one's own voice is the sweetest music to an uncircumcised ear. Nor does this rule apply only to "the other fellow." In view of the many pitfalls of speech, we see that silence has a definite value. We seldom regret our silences, but how many bitter moments our words have given us! "The talkative must take the consequences." Perhaps the world in general would be a better place if every one joined in a weekly "day of silence." The discipline would unquestionably be wholesome, if difficult.

"Silence is golden"—in the proper time. The Wise Man avers "there is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccl. 3: 7). Note the order of these things—silence before speech—for it is not accidental. The tongue is not basically an instrument of evil; in fact, it is entirely neutral by nature, and its perversion is a symptom rather than a disease of the member itself. Behind it lies the heart or mind of its possessor, and the oft-abused

tongue is merely the outlet. "Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," said the Son of man, who knew as no other has known what is in man (Matt. 12: 34; John 2: 25). The deadly poison which flows through the tongue proceeds from a deeper source, and that is where treatment of the disease must begin and end. "Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 18: 31).

The making of this new heart or mind requires time, and this is the period when silence and watchfulness are most essential. The Prophet admonishes us (Isa. 58: 13) not to do our own ways, nor find our own pleasures, nor *speak our own words*; and while we are educating the mind to conceive and the tongue to speak only the thoughts of the Almighty, it is a simple and safe and wise rule—abhorrent as it may be to our nature—to reduce the output of words and concentrate upon improvement of the quality thereof.

After the time for silence, comes the time to speak. Speech is not inherently evil, but is easily perverted. Speech was created that we might say pleasant and helpful things to one another, and that we might praise our Creator. Of these things there cannot be too much. "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life" (Prov. 15: 4), and the regrettable thing is that it is so rare.

The Psalmist David, whose bitter struggles with himself make him one of the most understandable of Scriptural characters, describes aptly the conflict and triumph of the man or woman undergoing this process of purification and re-education (Psalm 39: 1—3),

"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence; I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned." The fire, or Word of the Lord (Jer. 23: 29), must burn fiercely to melt out the dross and incrustation of evil inclination and wrong habit, before we are in a condition to speak with safety. "A slow fire is useless," said the Servant of these latter days. "Do not raise your voice against a big fire to burn out the dross." But after the fire has done its work—"then spake I with my tongue." Now we can talk to our heart's content, because our heart is purified. Now we can freely speak the words of God, infinitely higher than our words because His thoughts are loftier than ours (Isa. 55: 9). Now we can say with the Psalmist, "My heart is inditing [bubbling up with] a good matter . . . my tongue is the pen of a ready writer" (45: 1). Now we shall discover situations where silence would be criminal; where failure to speak the word of warning or encouragement might contribute to the downfall of another.

Death and life are determined by the tongue; it reveals our spiritual condition just as our blood pressure reveals the state of our arteries. If the words of our mouth are in righteousness, it is evident that we are in the way of life; if speaking foolish, vulgar, profane, vainglorious or rebellious words, it reflects a diseased condition, the end of which is everlasting death. Remembering that every inclination of our nature is downward, to the level of the beast and the savage, we shall do well to maintain a ceaseless, vigilant watch over this troublesome but valuable little member, regarding it as a mirror of our inner life, correcting the trouble at the source that we may not be compelled to eat the bitter fruit of an unbridled tongue and an unregenerated heart. The rewards of discipline are too great to miss, the price of indulgence too high.

ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

A sister at Marble Hill, Mo., is always appreciative of letters.

"Dear Sister: We read in II. Peter 1:13 where the Apostle says: 'I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance.' Well, I think if the people needed to be stirred up in that day, surely we need to be stirred up. And that is just what these good letters are doing, reminding us to redeem the time, 'because the days are evil' (Eph. 5:15).

"This month is one in which Thanksgiving occurs. I feel that I have something to always be thankful for, and that is for getting in touch with Megiddo people, and could so quickly discard all the fables that I had been taught from my youth up and accept the truth uncovered by Brother Nichols. November also brings sad memories to my mind, as Sister Hembree and Sister Skeels fell asleep in this month, until the Resurrection Day when they shall be awakened to die no more.

Your sister in the one true faith, Maranatha!
Mrs. A— H—."

Another good letter is from a sister at Fruitland, Ont.

"Dear Sister: Thank you for the good thoughts sent to help us along the road of life. As you say, a Christ-like character is not formed in a moment. It takes great will-power to bring every thought, word, and feeling and deed into subjection to truth. Repetition is a good teacher. As children we were often disturbed when one word was misspelled and the teacher ordered us to write it correctly 10 or more times. We thought it was an injustice. We had only spelled it wrong once. But now we know how wise that teacher was. It takes more than one act of the will to correct a wrong impression or a bad habit. If we keep repeating the good thoughts they will begin to grow and fill our thinking and waking hours.

"The Psalmist said: 'Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.' If we would meet the faithful of the ages, our conduct must reach this standard. As we heard in a sermon: 'Salvation is based upon walking in good works—and salvation depends upon our obedience. Our shortcomings will never bring the mercy of God.' With Christian love, W— H—."

From the sister at South Amboy, N. J., is a good letter.

"Dear Sister: In reading Luke 8:10 we find Jesus said, 'Unto you is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.' A very striking picture of the masses today! They hear the gospel preached constantly, but the eyes of their understanding are closed. We who are striving to please the Lord are not left in darkness as to what is required of us: 'but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.'

"Resisting the evils of our nature on every hand and bearing our adversities courageously will gain for us strength that in due time we will run and not stumble. A wise old saying is, 'Where there's a will there's a way.' How true! If every Christian adopted this resolution, soon the obstacles in the path would melt away. When the road is rough at times I need to commune with my God in the secret chamber of my closet, and He gives me added strength to fight the good fight. The MESSAGE and Bible School Notes coming so regularly to us are good and enlightening so that if we should fall, who is to blame? With Christian love, L. M. K—."

DANGER IN LITTLE THINGS

(Continued from page 7)

It was once said that what the world needs is not more teachers, doctors, lawyers, and engineers who are Christians; but more Christians who are teachers, doctors, lawyers and engineers. This is a striking way of saying Christian character must be put first in estimating the worth of the individual. All the aforementioned professions are useful; yet every one can work harm for humanity unless the person practicing that profession has sound moral character, guided by Christian principles. True faith and full allegiance to its principles will give a person strength of character to resist temptation, great or small; for he will realize that he will receive from the great Judge the reward of his deeds.

We cannot be indifferent to our spiritual weaknesses, the little sins; for they, like the moths, can and will do much damage. We must guard our character with as much caution as the New York firm guards their rugs against the little pests; by realizing the danger of little things. It will take constant watchfulness; as danger of doing wrong is ever present.

"They call him strong who stands unmoved,
Calm as some tempest-beaten rock.
When some great trouble hurls its shock
We say of him, his strength is proved.
But when the spent storm folds its wings,
How bears he then life's little things?"

Thanksgiving

The National Holiday proclaimed by our President as a fitting time to render thanks to the Giver of all our blessings is but one of the 365 days during the year on which the true Christian offers his heartfelt gratitude for blessings received. If we are even nearly as thankful as we should be, the expression thereof will be full and frequent. And we will make an acceptable offering of good works in confirmation.

As we, at Megiddo Mission, heartily endorse such a proposition, the day was observed quietly but completely. The morning service hour beginning at 8 o'clock was given over to a praise service befitting the occasion. A Ladies' Chorus in pilgrim costume and carrying loaded harvest baskets or aprons opened the program with the Chorus, "Thanks be to God." There was a short lesson in action concerning selfish and unselfish assistance, and a dialogue on complaining *versus* the thankful spirit. The hour concluded with an adaptation from the late Joaquin Miller's stirring poem, "On, Sail On!" with its timely lesson to each spiritual Columbus to press on unswervingly over the Sea of Time before us, full of faith that in God's appointed time we shall reach the shores of the new Country which we seek.

The usual afternoon broadcast included some interesting and novel selections.

The evening entertainment, conducted by the Men's Fellowship Group, presented "Thanksgiving Voices of the Past" which included Caleb, David, the leper that returned, and a Pilgrim Father.

This, with a variety of musical selections, band, vocal and instrumental, together with a dictation of Paul's Second Timothy, afforded a very pleasant evening to homefolks and visitors who came from around the State, Pennsylvania, and Ontario, Canada.

WHEN I FRET

I am reluctant to complain
If we should have a spell of rain;
In fact, if it be cool or hot,
To me the weather matters not.
My losses I hold in disdain,
(Because in them there may be gain)
And other misadventures find
Me in a tranquil state of mind.

But when I am inclined to fret,
And all my blessings would forget,
It seems that something comes to me,
To cause my blinded eyes to see.
And I am glad that it is so,
Because I do not want to grow
Unthankful with the passing years,
Still finding fault when Christ appears.

A crippled person passing by,
Whose every step brings forth a sigh,
As painfully he trudges on,
May bid *my* fleeting woes, "begone!"
Or I may see real strength displayed
By someone who is not afraid,
Although he carries a white cane,
And *feels* his way, in sun and rain.

Or I, perchance, may pause to greet
A neighbor—but I must repeat
My salutation, for I see
Quite plainly he does not hear me.
And it has happened, once or twice,
When I begrudged some sacrifice,
That my attention has been called
To some disaster that appalled.

These lessons I must take to heart,
And let their evidence impart
A sense of thankfulness—and shame—
For blessings that I fail to name.
So I'm resolved to be content,
Convinced too much time has been spent
In grumbling, when I should rejoice,
And in thanksgiving raise my voice.

—L. L. S.